

What is claimed is:

1. A portable storage device comprising:

a storage cartridge including a storage medium, a
5 storage medium control device that performs writing of
data in said storage medium and reading of data from
said storage medium, and a casing that contains said
storage medium and said storage medium control device;
a main unit including a receiving and ejecting
10 device that receives said storage cartridge from an
outside of said main unit into a predetermined inner
position within said main unit, and ejects said storage
cartridge out of said main unit from the predetermined
inner position, and a storage operation control device
15 that controls storage operation for storing data in
said storage cartridge;

an accessibility determining device that
determines whether or not access to contents recorded
on said storage medium can be gained before said
20 receiving and ejecting device performs a receiving
operation; and

a reception inhibiting device that inhibits said
receiving and ejecting device from performing the
receiving operation when said accessibility determining
25 device determines that the access cannot be gained.

2. A portable storage device as claimed in claim
1, wherein said accessibility determining device

determines whether or not the access can be gained by trying access to said storage medium.

3. A portable storage device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said storage cartridge includes another storage medium storing format information and access right information of said storage medium, and said accessibility determining device tries access to the other storage medium to thereby determine from the format information and the access right information whether or not the access can be gained.

4. A portable storage device as claimed in claim 3, wherein the other storage medium is a nonvolatile semiconductor memory.

5. A portable storage device as claimed in claim 3, wherein when said accessibility determining device tries access to the other storage medium but cannot determine that the access can be gained, said accessibility determining device tries access to said storage medium to thereby determine whether or not the access can be gained.

6. A portable storage device as claimed in claim 2, wherein said accessibility determining device determines whether or not the access can be gained by determining whether or not said storage medium is formatted.

7. A portable storage device as claimed in claim 2, wherein said accessibility determining device

determines whether or not the access can be gained by determining whether or not said storage medium is controllably formatted.

8. A portable storage device as claimed in claim 5 2, wherein said accessibility determining device determines whether or not the access can be gained by determining whether or not a user has an access right to said storage medium.

9. A portable storage device as claimed in claim 10 6, wherein said receiving and ejecting device is responsive to a determination by said accessibility determining device that the access can be gained, for receiving said storage cartridge into the predetermined inner position substantially simultaneously with 15 completion of the determination.

10. A portable storage device as claimed in claim 6, further comprising a notification device which is responsive to a determination by said accessibility determining device that the access cannot be gained, 20 for notifying a user that the access cannot be gained.

11. A portable storage device as claimed in claim 10, further comprising a format process device which is responsive to a determination by said accessibility determining device that the access cannot be gained, 25 for asking the user whether or not said storage medium is to be formatted, and is responsive to an instruction by the user that said storage medium is to be formatted,

for causing said storage cartridge to be received into the predetermined inner position and formatting said storage medium in a controllable format.

12. A portable storage device as claimed in claim 5 3, wherein when the formatting is executed, format information on the format of said storage medium is written into the other storage medium.

13. A portable storage device as claimed in claim 3, wherein when the access right is changed during use 10 of said storage cartridge, access right information on the changed access right is written into the other storage medium.

14. An electronic information apparatus including the portable storage device as claimed in claim 1.

15 15. A method of controlling a portable storage device, comprising:

a storage medium control step of performing writing of data in a storage medium contained in a storage cartridge and reading of data from the storage 20 medium;

a receiving and ejecting step of receiving the storage cartridge from outside a main unit into a predetermined inner position within the main unit, and ejecting the storage cartridge out of said main unit 25 from the predetermined inner position;

a storage operation control step of controlling storage operation for storing data in the storage

cartridge;

an accessibility determining step of determining whether or not access to contents recorded on said storage medium can be gained, before a receiving
5 operation is performed in said receiving and ejecting step; and

an reception inhibiting step of inhibiting the receiving operation from being performed in said receiving and ejecting step when it is determined in
10 said accessibility determining step that the access cannot be gained.

16. A control program for a portable storage device, for causing a computer to execute the method as claimed in claim 15.

15 17. A portable storage device comprising:

a storage cartridge including a storage medium, a storage medium control device that performs writing of data in said storage medium and reading of data from said storage medium, and a casing that contains said
20 storage medium and said storage medium control device;

a main unit including a receiving and ejecting device that receives said storage cartridge from an outside of said main unit into a predetermined inner position within said main unit, and ejects said storage
25 cartridge out of said main unit from the predetermined inner position, and a storage operation control device that controls storage operation for storing data in

said storage cartridge;

a receiving/ejecting operation determining device that determines an operative state of said receiving and ejecting device; and

5 an access inhibiting device that inhibits access to said storage medium based on control by said storage operation control device from being gained, depending on a result of the determination by said receiving/ejecting operation determining device.

10 18. A portable storage device as claimed in claim 17, wherein said receiving/ejecting operation determining device determines which of a standby state in which a loading operation for receiving said storage cartridge is awaited, a loading state in which the loading
15 operation is being performed, a loading completed state in which the loading operation has been completed, and an ejecting state in which an ejecting operation for ejecting said storage cartridge is being performed, the operative state of said receiving and ejecting device
20 corresponds to, and when the operative state corresponds to one of the loading state and the ejecting state, said access inhibiting device inhibits the access to said storage medium based on control by said storage operation control device from being gained.

25 19. A portable storage device as claimed in claim 18, wherein when the operative state of said receiving and ejecting device corresponds to a state other than

the loading completed state, said access inhibiting device inhibits the access to said storage medium based on control by said storage operation control device from being gained.

5 20. A portable storage device as claimed in claim 18, wherein said access inhibiting device inhibits the access to said storage medium based on control by said storage operation control device from being gained, by providing control such that operations are performed in
10 a same manner as in a case where said storage cartridge is actually unloaded, irrespective of whether or not said storage cartridge is physically loaded in said main unit.

 21. A portable storage device as claimed in claim
15 17, wherein said access inhibiting device comprises a signal cutoff device that electrically cuts off at least part of electric signals transmitted between said storage operation control device and said storage cartridge.

20 22. A portable storage device as claimed in claim 21, wherein said signal cutoff device comprises a semiconductor device.

 23. An electronic information apparatus including the portable storage device as claimed in claim 17.

25 24. A method of controlling a portable storage device, comprising:

 a storage medium control step of performing

writing of data in a storage medium contained in a storage cartridge and reading of data from the storage medium;

a receiving and ejecting step of causing a
5 receiving and ejecting device to receive the storage cartridge from outside a main unit into a predetermined inner position within the main unit, and eject the storage cartridge out of said main unit from the predetermined inner position;

10 a storage operation control step of controlling a storage operation for storing data in the storage cartridge;

a receiving/ejecting operation determining step of determining an operative state of the receiving and
15 ejecting device; and

an access inhibiting step of inhibiting access to the storage medium based on control in said storage operation control step from being gained, depending on a result of the determination in said
20 receiving/ejecting operation determining step.

25. A control program for causing a computer to execute the method of controlling a portable storage device as claimed in claim 24.